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## A PROPOSED ENGLISH ANCESTRY FOR HENRY<sup>2</sup> BALL (circa 1676–1735) OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

*By Rachal M. Lennon, CGRS*

Genealogy is replete with enigmas, and some family lines seem to present them in every generation. A case at point is the surname ancestry of one Ferdinand James Ball (1824–1874), who created a new identity for himself in frontier Texas. After four decades of pursuing clues and rumors from Vermont to California, Ferdinand's great-grandson and a team of researchers succeeded in tracking the Texan's roots to colonial Tidewater Virginia. Two journal articles and one book detail the resources, methodology, and results that link Ferdinand to a great-great-grandfather, Henry Ball, who emerged, fully grown, at Ball's Neck, Middlesex County, Virginia, in 1697.<sup>1</sup> The present article continues with an investigation of Henry's probable origin.

Stubborn lineages are particularly common in southern U.S. genealogy, where vital records were seldom recorded before the twentieth century, where courthouse record losses have been phenomenal, and where frontier conditions created fewer records in the first place. In these cases, persistence and a honed talent for extracting blood from turnips can lead—if not to answers—then at least to a reasonable hypothesis. As a word of warning: Such conclusions should be risked only after *all* known records have been exhausted. Even then, one must acknowledge that the most carefully reasoned conclusion is subject to change upon discovery of a previously unknown record.

The origin of Henry Ball represents a perhaps typical example of a hypothesis based upon a “most probable scenario.” This paper proposes that his father was

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<sup>1</sup> Donna Rachal Mills [Lennon], *Some Southern Balls, from Valentine to Ferdinand and Beyond* (Orlando, Florida, 1993); Elizabeth Shown Mills, “The Search for Margaret Ball: Building Steps Over a Brick-Wall Research Problem,” *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* [NGSQ] 77(1989):43–65; and Elizabeth Shown Mills and Sharon Sholars Brown, “In Search of Mr. Ball: An Exercise in Finding Fathers,” NGSQ 80(1992):115–33.

In addition to the three named authors, who worked between 1985 and 1993, substantial contributions to the research cited above were made by Gale Williams Bamman, CG, CGL, of Nashville, Tenn., and Mary McCampbell Bell, CALS, CGL, of Arlington, Va. The Ball descendant who commissioned and assisted with the search was R. C. Ball of Houston, Tex.; he has deposited his files with Houston's Clayton Library.

A general note on sources: In the course of the present study, all original records of the relevant era in the courthouses of Essex (Old Rappahannock), Lancaster, Middlesex, and Northumberland counties were examined. For many of these records, abstracts of exceedingly high reliability are also available in the publications of Ruth and Sam Sparacio of McLean, Va., issued under the imprint of their Antient Press.

an older Henry Ball, who immigrated to Virginia prior to 1661 from the London parishes of St. Bride, Fleet Street, and St. Andrew, Holborn. The evidence supporting this proposition is presented here in hopes that exposure to public scrutiny will test the conclusions or prompt information leading to a correction, should one be warranted.

## BACKGROUND

Previously reported research establishes the following Virginia lineage for Ferdinand James<sup>5</sup> Ball: James<sup>4</sup> Ball (1783–1861) of Amherst County and elsewhere; John<sup>3</sup> Ball (1745–1817) of Amherst, Henrico, and Nelson counties; Valentine<sup>2</sup> Ball (ca. 1705–70) of Amherst, Caroline, Henrico, and Middlesex counties; and Henry<sup>1</sup> Ball (ca. 1676–1735) of Middlesex. Among the other previously established details are the following points critical to the present paper:<sup>2</sup>

1 Valentine<sup>2</sup> Ball married Susannah Lewis in Middlesex Co. in 1733.

2 Henry<sup>1</sup> Ball married at least three times: 1705, Alice Brooks; 1714, Sarah Bristow; and 1722, Elizabeth Tuggles.<sup>3</sup> He signed his documents with an "H." Thus, for distinction, he is referred to hereafter as Henry "H" Ball.

3 Susannah Lewis was a great-granddaughter of the immigrant Thomas O'Brissell and a great-great-granddaughter of the immigrant Henry Nichols, both of whom settled neighboring tracts south of the Rappahannock River in the 1650s.

4 All these families (Ball, Bristow, Brooks, Lewis, Nichols, O'Brissell, and Tuggles) lived in a relatively small area of Christ Church Parish, in upper Middlesex (formerly Lancaster) Co. The major landmarks in their neighborhood were Burnham's Creek (also called Boswold, Corbin, and Sunderland), Dragon Swamp (also called Great and Mickelborough Swamp), and Ball's Neck.

Subsequent efforts to identify Henry "H" Ball's father have taken a two-pronged approach:

1 Reconstruction of the entire Ball's Neck neighborhood, tracking all land titles from the mid-1600s to the mid-1800s, to establish relationships between the various Balls and their neighbors—a project that generated some 150 pages of single-spaced, typed deed, patent, and will abstracts, as well as painstaking and meticulous platting.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise cited, the following detail is from Mills, *Some Southern Balls*, 3–41.

<sup>3</sup> There is a possibility, not previously discussed in print, that he had a wife prior to his 1705 marriage to Alice Brooks. In Nov. 1699 the Christ Church parish vestry authorized a small support payment to the "old woman" Dorothy Manuell. The following November, the vestry authorized 1000 pounds of tobacco to be paid to Henry Ball for providing her care during the next twelve months. After that year, she was assigned to someone else, although she would later be sent back to Henry. Parish vestries did not commonly assign unmarried females to the home of unmarried males—although Dorothy's age *might* have been a mitigating factor. It is more likely that Henry was married, or that he was a widower with an infant for whom female care was needed. Similarly, the fact that Dorothy did not stay in his home after that one year suggests that either his wife died, or (if she were already dead) that their infant had died, or that Henry had given it over to the care of a relative. For the 1699–1701 vestry actions, see Christ Church Vestry Book, Middlesex Co., Va., 87, 89, 137, 142 [Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City, film #30,822].

<sup>4</sup> This land work was performed by Mary McCampbell Bell.

2 Exhaustive research on all area Balls (var. Beales, Bells, Boales, etc.) and their known associates, not just in Middlesex but also in the surrounding counties of Lancaster, Northumberland, Old Rappahannock (later Essex and Richmond), and Westmoreland. This study has produced another 234 pages of single-spaced, typed abstracts from holdings of local courthouses, the Library of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society, and the Martha Ball Washington Museum, among other resources.

None of this work has produced any document stating a relationship between Henry "H" Ball and any other individual aside from his three wives. In fact, the project has yielded very little data on Henry at all—a not uncommon circumstance for non-elite families of the time and place. Nor does evidence support a family tradition of kinship to the illustrious Balls from whom George Washington's mother descends, a family rooted in the Corotoman River area of Lancaster County, before 1653, by the merchant and planter Col. William Ball.

What the evidence does reveal is this: Nine men of the name Ball or variant spellings are placeable in Middlesex and surrounding counties prior to the birth of Henry "H." Of this number, there is only one for whom the evidence warrants his consideration as father of Henry "H": an older Henry Ball (hereafter simply called *Henry*) who makes three cameo appearances in the 1660s. The proposed relationship is based on six arguments that are developed herein:

1 Henry "H" first appears on record in 1697, at which time he was sued as an adult. Hence his birth can be placed at 1676 or earlier. The fact that his known marriages occurred between 1705 and 1722 suggest that his birth likely did not occur long before 1676.

2 The older Henry was definitely an adult by the time of his 1669/70 power of attorney. Thus, he was at least a generation older than Henry "H."

3 All known associates of both men centered upon Ball's Neck.

4 Neither man owned land but associated with landowners on a level of equality—and their intimates were the same small cluster of interrelated families. The overlap in associates is much too striking to be coincidental.

5 No other adult male Ball can be placed contemporaneously in that location.

6 All other adult male Balls in this four-county area after 1660 left records adequate to identify their offspring or otherwise eliminate them.

### HENRY BALL OF VIRGINIA, 1661–70

A mere three records place the name "Henry Ball" along the border between Middlesex (formerly part of Lancaster County) and Old Rappahannock (the part that is now Essex County) (*emphasis added*):

RECORD 1, 12 March 1661/2, Lancaster Co.

Certificate according to acte is granted unto Lt. Col. Robt. Smyth for the transportation of: Wm. Daniell, Roger Shawcocke, Rich. Bostocke. Tho. Searelisby, Abra. Lauds, Jo. Kirke, Willm. Skelton, John Godfry, John Glasson, Tho. Wyneate, Geo. Davyes, Peter Benett, Will. Hill, Will. Lary, Fran. Street, Robt. Lee, Jo. Brownin, **Hen. Ball**, Tho. Rapier, Tho. Wrots, Rich. Thompsin, Robt. Whithorns, Matth. Stevenson & Phil. James, Tho. Browne, Will. Morrell, Wm. Chapman,

Jno Breading, Sara Chip, Mary Turner, Ann Linksy, Eliz. Clarke, Joan Morgan, Eliz. Pellington, Herman Gillet, and 8 Negroes.<sup>5</sup>

RECORD 2, 20 March 1667, Old Rappahannock Co.

Major General Robert Smith granted 1900 acres in Rappahannock Co. in the freshes and on the south side of the river about a mile from the river or bay side of Potobago, beginning near the head of the easternmost branch of Potobago Creek, for the transportation of: Wm. Danyell, Tho. Dawkins, Roger Shawcocke, Rich. Bostocke, Tho. Sealbey, Abra. Lawes, Jno. Kirke, Wm. Skelton, Jno. Godfrey, Jno. Balsson, Tho. Wingate, Geo. Davyes, Pet. Bennett, Wm. Will, Wm. Lacy, Fra. Street, Robt. Lee, Jno. Browne, **Hen. Ball**, Tho. Rapier, Tho. Wroth, Rich. Thompson, Robt. Whitehorn, Mathew Stevenson, Xpofer Jeames, Tho. Browne, Wm. Worrell, Wm. Chapman, Geo. Breeding, Charles Chipp, Mary Turner, Anne Lynbey, Eliz. Clarke, Jno. Morgan, Eli. Pellington, German Gillett and 2 negroes.<sup>6</sup>

RECORD 3, 1 March 1669/70, Old Rappahannock Co.

Thomas and Ann Pattison of Rappahannock Co. to Henry Creighton, for 1000 pounds of tobacco and caske: 200 acres situated on the south side of Rappa. River and lying upon a main branch of the Dragon Swamp . . . adjoining John Chynn, John Gibson . . . Jno. Mayo . . . Markam's land. . . Creighton agrees to convey half of the land unto John Bradger, son of Richard Bradger, when he attains the age of 21. Both sign their names. Witnesses: Jno. Ellis and John Mornshatt. On the same day, Tho. and Ann Pattison appoint their friend **Henry Ball** their attorney to acknowledge in the County Court of Rappahannock the sale unto Henry Creighton formerly taken up by Tho. Pattison and Rich. Bradger, dec'd.<sup>7</sup>

Obviously, the first two records pertain to the same Henry Ball; but was he the same as the Henry Ball of Record 3, the Pattison associate of 1669/70? More crucially, was the Henry Ball of any of these records the father of Henry "H" Ball?

One step is fundamental to answering both questions: pinpointing a residential site for the Henry in each document. While all three records are vague on location—a situation typical for the time and place—the details are adequate when appropriately analyzed and correlated against other records.

### ANALYSIS OF RECORDS 1-2

The Henry of these two documents arrived in Virginia at the end of a lengthy peak in immigration. The rapid growth of the tobacco industry during the colony's first half-century had created a constant demand for a cheap work force, and white indentured servitude was the foundation of the labor market. (Negro slavery did not overtake white indentures until later in the century.) Immigrants generally fell into four categories: those who paid their own passage; those transported under some form of labor contract in exchange for passage; mariners on trans-Atlantic ships who decided to settle in the colony; and convicts.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Lancaster Co. Orders, 1656-66:101.

<sup>6</sup> Nell Marion Nugent, ed., *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, 1623-1800*, 7 vols. (Richmond, Va., 1934-99), 2:32.

<sup>7</sup> Old Rappahannock Co. Deeds 4:133-35.

<sup>8</sup> For the most recent study of the Virginia Chesapeake immigration, see James Horn, *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1994).

The Smyth documents of 1661/2 and 1667 illustrate the two types of records commonly created in Virginia's land-grant process: a certificate of eligibility for acreage and a patent citing the location chosen and surveyed. Virginia's headright system of the 1600s allotted fifty acres per person to those who paid their own passage or that of another—technically called *personal* rights or *transportation* rights, respectively. However, many people who paid their own passage were tradespeople and urban dwellers who had no use for raw, rural land; and so they sold their headrights. Conversely, land speculators and ambitious planters bought those rights—not only from individuals who had paid their own way but also from those who had paid the way of others. Typically, these documents just list the names of immigrants for whom acreage is allotted; they do not finely differentiate between people who had paid their own passage and those transported at the expense of someone else.<sup>9</sup>

While Smith (as his name is more commonly written) entered land in Old Rappahannock, it does not necessary follow that he actually lived there. Prosperous men in this society often speculated on land across several counties. To identify their actual residence, one must study court orders and tithe rolls, as well as subsequent land sales that may refer to their actual dwellings (including deed records created by neighbors that occasionally mention occupants of homes on adjacent tracts). In this case, Smith did indeed settle in the area that became Middlesex—more precisely, northwest Middlesex, straddling the line with Old Rappahannock.<sup>10</sup>

It would also be a mistake to assume that transportees settled in the same county as the person who paid their passage or eventually bought their headrights. Many indentured servants, for example, were sent to work on plantations other than the one on which the transporter lived—even in different counties. In the present case, eleven of the individuals whose transportation rights Smith claimed can be definitively placed in Middlesex; and at least two were his servants after their arrival.<sup>11</sup> But Henry Ball, specifically, does not appear in any civil or church record preserved in Middlesex or its parent county, Lancaster; and neither of the Smith documents suggests where he lived, exactly when he arrived, or who paid his pas-

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<sup>9</sup> For a fuller explication of Virginia headright law, see Richard Slatten, "Interpreting Headrights in Colonial Virginia Patents: Uses and Abuses," NGSQ 75(1987): 169–79.

<sup>10</sup> See particularly Lancaster tithe lists for 1659–68, available in Sparacio, *Order Book Abstracts of Lancaster County, Virginia, 1656–1661* (McLean, Va., 1993), 63, 79, 96; Sparacio, *Order Book Abstracts of Lancaster County, Virginia, 1662–1666* (McLean, Va., 1993), 13, 30, 61; and Sparacio, *Order Book Abstracts of Lancaster County, Virginia, 1666–1669* (McLean, Va., 1993), 10, 33, 62. Numerous land transactions for Smith appear in the recorded deeds of Lancaster and Middlesex.

<sup>11</sup> The two transportees who were personal servants of Smith were Abraham Lawes (var. Lauds) and Elizabeth Clarke, by whom Lawes fathered a child in 1662/3 (Sparacio, *Order Book Abstracts of Lancaster, 1662–1666*, 17). The other nine transportees who left records in Lancaster and Middlesex were William Chapman, William Danyell [Daniell], George Davyes [Davies], Thomas Dawkins, William Hill, Roger Shawcocke, William Skelton, Richard Thompson, and Thomas Wrots [Wroth].

sage. Thus, these two documents do not tie this Henry Ball to any location, and so we are free to propose that all three of these records pertain to the same man.

### ANALYSIS OF RECORD 3

The Pattison deed, on the surface, says nothing more about Henry Ball, aside from his stated friendship with that Rappahannock (Essex) County couple. However, the document plays a critical role in placing the 1669/70 Henry into a *specific neighborhood*. A study of all Pattison records filed in Rappahannock and Lancaster yields the following details that clearly link Henry Ball of the 1660s to the Henry "H" Ball who spent his adult life at Ball's Neck on Burnham Creek, Middlesex County:

1 Thomas Pattison, the "friend" whose deed Henry acknowledged in court, arrived in the Middlesex area by 1655. Beginning as a cooper, he rose to become a "planter," after which he was occasionally accorded the title *Mr.*<sup>12</sup>

2 Pattison's Middlesex landholdings centered primarily on Dragon Swamp and Burnham's Creek (also called Boswold, Corbin, and Sunderland)—the subsequent neighborhood of Henry "H" Ball, his associates, and his offspring.<sup>13</sup>

3 In 1660 Pattison appears on the unalphabetized, neighborhood-ordered, title list for Christ Church Parish—two names from Henry Nichols, three from Thomas Williams, and four from Thomas Tuggles.<sup>14</sup> All three men and/or their children were intimately associated with Henry "H" Ball. Nichols is discussed separately below. Williams died in 1685, leaving his land to his son Edward; when Edward moved off that land and sold it in 1708, the friend called in to witness his wife's relinquishment was Henry "H" Ball.<sup>15</sup> And Tuggles's Henry was Henry "H" Ball's father-in-law.<sup>16</sup>

4 In 1661 Pattison's house stood on a tract adjacent to Burnham (Boswold) Creek land patented to Col. Cuthbert Potter.<sup>17</sup> In 1669 a portion of Potter's land became the "homeplace" of Thomas O'Brissell, whose great-granddaughter married Henry "H" Ball's son Valentine.<sup>18</sup>

5 In 1662 after Pattison moved across the county line into Rappahannock, he sold his own homeplace to his "friend Henry Nichols."<sup>19</sup> (Five years later, Maj. Gen. Robert Smith—the former colonel who cashed in Henry Ball's transportation right—patented 550 acres adjoining Nichols on

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<sup>12</sup> For Pattison's activities and economic standing, see, for example, Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills 1652–57:219–20; Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills, 1654–61:159, 207, 223–24; Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills, 1661–1702:269–70; Sparacio, *Deed and Will Abstracts of Old Rappahannock County, Virginia*; vol. 1: *Deeds & Wills, no. 1, July 1665–1677* (McLean, Va., 1989), 27; Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, 1:357, 361, 498, and 2:43.

<sup>13</sup> Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills, 1652–57:219–20; Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills, 1654–61:159; Lancaster Co. Orders, 1656–66:63, 133, 268; Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills, 1661–1702: 131, 269–70; Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, 1:357, 361, 494; Virginia Land Patents, 6:51, Library of Virginia.

<sup>14</sup> Lancaster Co. Orders, 1656–66:133.

<sup>15</sup> Middlesex Co. Deeds 3:269–74.

<sup>16</sup> Mills, *Some Southern Balls*, 10–11.

<sup>17</sup> Virginia Land Patents, 6:51.

<sup>18</sup> Mills, *Some Southern Balls*, 10–12. The 1669 Potter to O'Brissell transfer is recited in the 1704 deed of John and Mary Stone of King and Queen County to Valentine Mayo (Middlesex Co. Deeds 3:44–46).

<sup>19</sup> Lancaster Co. Deeds Wills, and Settlements of Estates, 1661–1702:242–43.



Sunderland Creek.)<sup>20</sup> The Nichols connection would remain strong in the Ball family: Nichols's grandson John Lewis and O'Brissell's daughter would become the grandparents of Susannah Lewis, who wed Henry "H" Ball's son Valentine.<sup>21</sup>

6 Pattison's partner, in the purchase of his homeplace, was Robert Chowning.<sup>22</sup> In 1685 Chowning apprenticed a neighboring child named Elizabeth Manuell, daughter of the late Robert Manuell and his widow Dorothy.<sup>23</sup> Fourteen years later, Dorothy went on the public dole, and from 1700–16, the parish vestry paid 1000 pounds of tobacco annually to Henry "H" Ball, his Mayo in-laws, and their neighbor Edmund Mickelborough, to provide a home for the "old woman" Dorothy Manuell.<sup>24</sup> Again, the implication is inescapable: Young Henry "H" Ball was well established in the neighborhood settled a generation earlier by Chowning and his partner, Henry Ball's intimate, Thomas Pattison. (Mickelborough, for his part, actually owned and occupied Pattison land.)<sup>25</sup>

7 In 1674 Potter's servant John Burke (Bourk) completed his indentureship and secured title to an unpatented tract adjacent to the Potter–O'Brissell–Nichols–Pattison lands—50 acres known as "Ball's Neck." When Burke sold the tract in 1686, the purchaser was Capt. John Lewis, carpenter, of Stratton Major Parish, New Kent County, husband of Elizabeth O'Brissell and grandfather-to-be of Susanna (Lewis) Ball.<sup>26</sup>

8 All but one of the other men named in the Pattison–Ball document can be placed on land in the Burnham Creek–Ball's Neck neighborhood, and most of their families remained there for generations to come. John Mayo's son Valentine, in fact, was the kinsman for whom Henry "H" Ball and his first wife, Alice (Brooks), named their firstborn son, Valentine Ball.<sup>27</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In short, Henry Ball of 1669/70 had one known intimate in the colony: Thomas Pattison, whose Middlesex neighbors were the same families with whom Henry "H" Ball was intimate when he came to adulthood in the county about 1697. That fact *might* represent a mere coincidence, but—in far more cases—the circumstance points directly to parentage and origin.

Is the proposed father-son relationship a reasonable scenario for this society? Yes. Would the absence of land or probate records on anyone of that name between 1669/70 and 1697 discredit the hypothesis? No. Recent historical studies have found that "60 to 70 percent of Virginia's [colonial] male population owned

<sup>20</sup> Virginia Land Patents, 6:115.

<sup>21</sup> Mills, *Some Southern Balls*, 8–12.

<sup>22</sup> Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, 1:361, 494; Sparacio, *Deed & Will Abstracts of Lancaster County, Virginia, 1661–1702* (McLean, Va., 1991), 9, 131.

<sup>23</sup> Middlesex Co. Deeds 2:212.

<sup>24</sup> Christ Church Vestry Book, 87, 89, 112, 114, 137, 142, 151, 155.

<sup>25</sup> Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, 3:2, recites the chain of title by which Pattison sold to John Bewfoot, who sold to Moses Buffrey, who conveyed the land to Edmund Mickelborough in 1664.

<sup>26</sup> Virginia Land Patents, 7:524; Middlesex Co. Orders, 1673–77:11; Mills, *Some Southern Balls*, 8–12.

<sup>27</sup> To associate Chinn, Gibson, Mayo, Bradger, and Ellis with the Ball neighborhood, see, for example, Sparacio, *Old Rappahannock Deeds 1668–72, Pt. I* (McLean, Va., 1989): 13, 20, 79–80; Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills, 1652–57:219–20; Lancaster Co. Deeds & Wills, 1654–61:159; Lancaster Co. Orders, 1656–66:63; Lancaster Co. Wills, 1690–1709:106; Middlesex Co. Deeds 3:340–3, 385, 505–6; Middlesex Co. Orders, 1677–80:201a; Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, 2:43; Virginia Land Patents, 6:166. Also see Mills, *Some Southern Balls*, 10–11.



no land at all.”<sup>28</sup> By 1669/70, the earliest date at which one can confidently say that Henry was adult, the Chesapeake had entered a period of depressed tobacco prices that made land acquisition increasingly difficult.<sup>29</sup> Considering the power of attorney he received that year from a man who was already styled “Mr.,” the possibility of Henry’s transportation as a servant is debatable. Possibly, he served Pattison as an overseer or bookkeeper, in which case he might have risen to that post from an earlier indenture. On the other hand, if he arrived in the colony as an adult paying his own passage—perhaps as a craftsman or tradesperson of limited funds—the small, fifty-acre headright may have had no value to him other than the price at which he could sell it. Subsequent evidence suggests that both Henry “H” Ball and his son Valentine practiced a trade.<sup>30</sup> And even though Henry “H” lived at a site known then as Ball’s Neck, there is no trace of landownership for him. For whatever reason, the same appears true for Henry.

Moreover, the seventeenth-century Tidewater suffered an appalling mortality rate—some historians assert that as many as forty percent of new immigrants died within several years of arrival—and the remarriage rate of widows was correspondingly high. If Henry Ball died during the gestation, infancy, or childhood of Henry “H” Ball, his widow would likely have remarried. In this era of skimpy records, fatherless children, stepchildren, and orphans—particularly if their father left them no real property—usually did not appear in county records until they reached adulthood, married, or began economic activity of their own; and several other Ball youths of unidentified parentage also came to adulthood in Middlesex in the decade preceding Henry “H”.<sup>31</sup> Under such circumstances, a twenty-to-thirty-year lapse between extant records of a biological father and son was not uncommon at all.<sup>32</sup>

All things considered, the Henry Ball of the Ball’s Neck area of Middlesex in 1669/70 remains the only viable candidate for the father of Henry “H” Ball who emerged in the Ball’s Neck area as a well-connected young man in 1697.

(to be continued)

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<sup>28</sup> David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York, 1989), 374.

<sup>29</sup> Horn, *Adapting to a New World*, 141–47.

<sup>30</sup> Mills, *Some Southern Balls*, 6–15.

<sup>31</sup> Horn, *Adapting to a New World*, 139.

<sup>32</sup> As a case at point, the Sept. 1995 issue of the NGSQ carries an article on the Taliaferro–French family that illustrates such a situation across three generations. The link between each is made only by a tract of land which each successively owned and occupied; see Margaret Amundson, “The Taliaferro–French Connection: Using Deeds to Prove Marriages and Parentage,” NGSQ 83(1995):192–98.